

The Comicall Historie of

Por. The qualitie of mercy is not straine,
It droppeth as the gentle raine from heaven
Upon the place beneath: it is twice blest,
It blesteth him that gives, and him that takes.
Tis mightiest in the mightiest, it becomes
The throned Monarch better then his Crowne.
His scepter shewes the force of temporall power,
The attribute to awe and majestic,
Wherein doth sit the dread and feare of Kings:
But mercy is above this sceptred sway,
It is enthroned in the hearts of Kings,
It is an attribute to God himselfe;
And earthly power doth then shew likest gods,
When mercy seasons justice: therefore Jew,
Though justice be thy plea, consider this,
That in the course of justice none of us
Should see salvation: we do pray for mercy,
And that same prayer, doth teach us all to render
The deeds of mercy. I have spoke thus much
To mitigate the justice of thy plea,
Which if thou follow, this strict Court of *Venice*
Must needs give sentence 'gainst the Merchant there.
Shy. My deeds upon my head, I crave the Law,
The penalty and forfeit of my Bond:
Por. Is he not able to discharge the money?
Bass. Yes, here I tender it for him in the Court,
Yea, twice the summe, if that will not suffice,
I will be bound to pay it ten times ore
On forfeit on my hands, my head, my heart;
If this will not suffice, it must appeare
That malice beares down truth. And I beseech you
Wrest once the Law to your authority,
To do a great right, do a little wrong,
And curbe this cruell Devill of his will.
Por. It must not be, there is no power in *Venice*
Can alter a Decree established:
'Twill be recorded for a precedent,
And many an error by the same example

Will

the Merchant of Venice.

Will rush into the state, it cannot be.
Shy. A *Daniel* come to judgement: yea a *Daniel*,
O wise young Judge, how I do honour thee.
Por. I pray you let me looke upon the Bond.
Shy. Here 'tis most reverend Doctor, here it is.
Por. *Shylocke*, there's thrice thy money offer'd thee.
Shy. An oath, an oath, I have an oath in heaven,
Shall I lay perjury upon my soule?
No, not for *Venice*.
Por. Why this Bond is forfeit,
And lawfully by this the Jew may claime
A pound of flesh, to be by him cut off,
Neerest the Merchants heart: be mercifull,
Take thrice thy money, bid me teare the Bond.
Shy. When it is paid according to the tenure.
It doth appeare you are a worthy Judge,
You know the law, your exposition
Hath been most sound: I charge you by the Law,
Whereof you are a well deserving Piller,
Proceed to judgement: by my soule I sweare,
There is no power in the tongue of man
To alter me, I stay here on my Bond.
Ant. Most heartily I do beseech the Court
To give the judgement.
Por. Why than thus it is,
You must prepare your bosome for his knife.
Shy. O noble judge, O excellent young man,
Por. For the intent and purpose of the Law
Hath full relation to the penalty,
Which here appeareth due upon the Bond,
Jew. Tis very true: O wise and upright judge,
How much more elder art thou then thy looks?
Por. Therefore lay bare your bosome.
Jew. I, his breast,
So sayes the Bond, doth it not noble judge?
Neerest his heart, those are the very words.
Por. It is so, are there ballance here to weigh the flesh?
Jew. I have them ready.

H

Por. Have